

NATIONAL WOMEN'S 25th ANNUAL MUSIC FESTIVAL

Another successful Music Festival was held at Ball State University June 17th - June 20th. As anyone who attends Festivals knows, you cannot get to all the events and workshops. While we liked some performers and did not care as much for others, there were others there who liked the ones we didn't and vice versa. I will write about some of the highlights for us. Since the 70's I have been a big fan of Janice Ian, so getting to have lunch with her and then hear her sing live was a thrill. Chris Williamson and Tret Fure were also good. Chris sang *The Changer and the Changed*, which was exciting and they sang their hit *Between the Covers*, which is one of my favorites. On day stage were Zoe Lewis and her Rubber Band. Zoe is one of those very talented ladies who plays a multitude of instruments as well as sings. There were two very exciting speakers - Betty DeGeneres and Dr. Joycelyn Elders. Betty has become a spokesperson for the Human Rights Campaign's National Coming out Project and received numerous standing ovations during her speech for her right on points of love and acceptance of all. Dr. Elders revealed some of the events that led to her firing as U.S. Surgeon General, but also stressed that women don't have decent health care, and that research on women's health issues is abominable. Both of these ladies have books out that should be must reading for all of us.



Perhaps the biggest highlight was setting up an audition for Sherry K. our own local very talented pianist with some important people so she could get heard by the right people. Several of us went to a Round Robbin led by Ginni Clemmens, one of the foremothers of women's music, where Sherry K got the opportunity to play and Ginni had very positive things to say about her talent. Also present was Kristin Lems who was the founder of the National Women's Music Festival 25 years ago when she was only 22 years old, and as she says, too young to know any better. Kristin sang a song about wrinkles that was delightful, and we are in the planning stage of bringing her in for a coffee house in the Fall so all of you can hear her.

Sunday, the Festival ended with the Comedy Stage which always sends you home with a laugh. Vicki Shaw as always had us in tears from laughter. She was also Emcee for two main stages, and this year brought her 14 year old daughter, who got her own laughs. Michele Balan was another comedienne from New York which I found to be very funny, as was Lisa Koch from Seattle (some of you may remember her as part of Dos Fallopias). Lisa will be performing at The Phoenix Theatre in Indianapolis June 23 - August 1 doing her show called, "*It Feels Good but you know its Wrong.*"

Even though attendance was down this year due to the late printing and mailing of the brochures, those of us that went had a really good time. The date has not been set for next year, but it will be in June and if you've never been, you should plan on it. If you can't afford it, let Kaye or Marcia know you want to go and we'll get you set up with reduced costs for work program.

GAY PRIDE DAY.....INDY

Did you notice that caravan going to Indianapolis? That was us!! We drove down to Indianapolis on Saturday, June 12 for Gay Pride Day in Indianapolis. I had a wonderful time at the festival. I enjoyed working at the registration table. They want me to come back next year and work the entire time. Part of the festival was to raise awareness and money for Justice, Inc. The entertainment was wonderful - and the food was great. You could buy anything you wanted from rainbow necklaces, magnets, books, T-shirts; so many items and vendors to look at - it was hard to see them all. The best part of the festival was spending time with people, talking, sharing and making new friends. The number of people in attendance made you feel comfortable to get a kiss from your honey or just hold hands. The Queens were all there decked out in their finest frocks. Oh, yes, there was that one in all leather. We enjoyed the show. It's so much fun to get away from the Michiana area and see new things and experience the joy of thousands of our people gathered together - remember there is power in the numbers. A great time was had by all. Why don't you plan to go with us next year. Better yet.... how about Chicago?.....Sharon H.

Subject: PBS One More Time!

On NPR Morning Edition April 26, Nina Tottenberg said that if the Supreme Court supports Congress, it is in effect the end of NEA. Then, there's the question of Congressional funding: funding for NPR/NEA & PBS. PBS, NPR (National Public Radio), and the arts are facing major cutbacks. In spite of the efforts of each station to reduce spending costs and streamline their services, some government officials believe that the funding currently going to these programs is too large a portion for something which is seen as not worthwhile.

Currently, taxes from the general public for PBS equal \$1.12 per person per year, and the National Endowment for the Arts equals \$0.64 a year. A January 1995 CNN/USA Today/ Gallup poll indicated that 76% of Americans wish to keep funding for PBS, third only to national defense and law enforcement as the most valuable programs for federal funding. Each year, the Senate and House Appropriations committees each have 13 subcommittees with jurisdiction over many programs and agencies. Each subcommittee passes its own appropriation bill. The goal each year is to have each bill signed by the beginning of the fiscal year, which is October 1.

The only way that our representatives can be aware of the base of support for PBS and funding for these types of programs is by making our voices heard. A petition is being passed around the Internet. This petition is for anyone who thinks NPR/PBS is a worthwhile expenditure of \$1.12/year of their taxes. Please forward this information to friends who believe in what this stands for. This list will be forwarded to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, and Representative Newt Gingrich, who is the instigator of the action to cut funding to these worthwhile programs. For more information, write to either of the e-mail addresses listed here:

wein2688@blue.univnorthco.edu, or kubi7975@blue.univnorthco.edu Forward this information to everyone you know, and help keep these programs alive. Contact your congressmen to tell them of your support for these programs.

COMMUNITY EVENTS



"SINGLED OUT", The singles group went to a one day Pridefest in Indy on June 12. About 15 people from this area converged on the state capitol for this event. As I sat in the shade listening to the entertainment and talking to friends, I realized how free and safe I felt. It was relaxing and very peaceful. Parking was close and there was no charge to get in to Veterans Memorial Park which is right on US 31 in downtown Indy. There were food vendors, lots of merchandise and booths from non-profit organizations. We will go next year for sure. Hope you will join us!!LYNN

"Singled out" for July....SATURDAY, JULY 17An evening at Weko Beach to play and watch the sunset. We will leave the Southside Christian Church at 4:00 (Indiana time) to arrive in Bridgeman, Michigan around 5:00 (we will carpool as much as we can as it costs \$5 per car load to get in). We will settle on the right side of the pavillion where there is the opportunity for sun and shade. You can ring a sack lunch, get food from the concession stand or from one of the restaurants in town. For more information &/or a ride, call Linda, 219-257-9082 or Lynn: 219-259-6801

June 23 thru August 1**Lisa Koch and Friends at the Phoenix Theatre**, N. Park Ave. & St. Clair St., Downtown Indianapolis. (317) 635-PLAY. Tickets \$18.00

Mountain Moving Coffeehouse: 1650 West Foster, Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Andersonville, IL 773-973-9934
Saturday, July 10, 7:30 P.M. Alix Dobkin returns for her yearly July visit

July 10...Sweet Honey in the Rock appearing at St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, IN for info call 219-284-4625

August 10 thru 15, Michigan Womyn's Music Festival: Continuing strong after 24 consecutive years, this festival attracts 5-8000 women for a week-long event that includes 40 performances, 200 workshops, a Film Festival, crafts Faire and 650 secluded acres for camping. Artists scheduled include: Suzanne Westenhoefer, Urban Bush Women, Dar Williams, The Drumsong Orchestra with Ubaka Hill, Marga Gomez, Cris Williamson & Tret Fure, Tribe 8 and others.
For further information, write to WWTMC, PO Box 22, Walhalla MI 49458, call 616-757-4766 or visit www.michfest.com

August 28,Niles Womyn's Dance 9 pm to 1 am Michigan/ 8pm to 12 midnight Indiana, held at the Pickwick Place, 219 N. 4th Street, Niles, MI.....sponsored by Lavender Rhythm

Sunday Sept. 5, 1999 Midwest Womyn's Autumfest, in Decalb, IL with Robin Tyler, Ferron, Lucie Blue Tremblay.
Visit website at MWAUTUMN@AOL.COM.

September 10 - 12.....Commitment 1999, an annual event held at the War Memorial in Downtown Milwaukee. Commitment begins Fri. evening and concludes with the Sunday morning spiritual breakfast. This event is for gay & lesbian recovering individuals and friends. There will be workshops on a variety of recovery topics, keynote speakers, Friday night Play, Sat. pizza party and dance.
Questions: Barb S. 414-483-6288 or Peter D. 414-305-9291

LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP Every Tuesday 7-9 P.M. For Info, write: LSG, P.O. BOX 1612, MISHAWAKA, IND. 46544

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN (NOW) **NO MEETINGS UNTIL SEPTEMBER** more info: Penny 291-2342

PFLAG (Parents & Friends of Lesbians and Gays) Meetings are from 2 to 4 p.m. the 4th Sunday of the month at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 17195 Cleveland Road, South Bend. For Info...Nancy 219-277-2684, or write P.O. Box 4195, S. Bend, 46634

COMMUNITY SPIRIT Area's (St. Joseph, MI) newest social/activity group. Meetings are the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of the month. More info, call Julie 616-982-1300 or Terry Kuseski at 616-925-7371, or e-mail Julie at firewomn@yahoo.com

KALAMAZOO GAY/LESBIAN RESOURCE CENTER, C.A.R.E.S Building, Lower Level
629 Pioneer Street, Kalamazoo, Mich. 49001 voice mail: (616) 349-4234

THE TREVOR HOTLINE National toll-free suicide hotline for gay and questioning youth. 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Teens can call 1-800-850-8078, where they can talk to trained counselors. All calls are free and confidential.

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TWO BOWLS OF CHERRIES

by Lee Lynch



I have a friend back east who decided to change gender. Glen says he's a lot happier now than he was as a female. Last time I saw him -- and we do seem to be disappearing from each other's lives -- Glen had a full beard. When we hugged I could feel its softness. When he spoke his voice had the inflection of a gentle gay man. His changes suited him.

Online, always our primary means of communication due to distance, he sounds the same. Still totally in love with his cat, he continues writing passionate poetry and having girlfriend troubles. He remains sober.

Though his altered life is no bowl of cherries, Glen is very pleased to have left the lesbian community behind. He felt abused by some of us, misunderstood, not accepted. And this was well before he changed some of his secondary sex characteristics. I don't know the story behind his feelings, but I do know we are sometimes capable of eating our young, if you'll pardon the expression.

And Glen came out young. The first time I saw him I wasn't sure he was female. I guess he wasn't, but he did come in a baby butch package at the time. He was beautiful. Bright-eyed, with a trundling walk and huggable. He was an irrepressible dyke, out, flagrant and politically energetic. I miss that gay kid a whole lot.

It's not important that I understand Glen's decisions, only that I accept them. And I try to, even as I mourn for the loss of a friend in whom I saw myself, to whom I could offer comfort and validation because I could say, "I've been there. I've survived."

Then he veered far from my path and I've been trying, trying to comprehend, to imagine myself in his shoes. If the science had been available when I was younger, would I have opted for gender reassignment?

Look at the advantages. I could marry Lover. We could adopt kids together, no hassle. We could share a last name. Fortunately, neither of us wants any of those things.

Then there's the little detail that Lover would not have chosen me because she's gay and I might not have been. I wouldn't have missed her for the world.

I could have dressed like a guy. Uh, I do now.

I could have had chest surgery. Uh, I can do that and remain a woman.

I could have grown a moustache and beard and had chest hair. Sorry, it's nice on Glen, but I'd be one of those guys who relishes being clean shaven and smooth-chested.

Born when I was, I could have been drafted and shipped to Viet Nam. No offence, but I'm an American chauvinist. I would have had a hard time living in Canada until the amnesty.

I could have had better upper body strength. That would have been useful.

I might have developed into a straight white male writer and written books that would have appealed to a broader audience because I would have been able to write about the experience of the dominant culture in America. And made money. Sorry, but everything in me recoils at those possibilities and I celebrate who I am and the choices I've made.

I could have had bottom surgery. For me, this would have been genital mutilation, even if the surgery were to be perfected. No one I know has opted for Female to Male bottom surgery.

I could have entered women's restrooms without frightening other women. I've learned a smile fixes that.

I could have passed. Switching genders would have been a new and improved closet for me.

I could have switched from one sort of societal oppression to another.

Terrific.

There's something magical about being gay. Drag kings and queens express a part of themselves while accepting and retaining their bodies. The mix is exciting and fun for me. If I'd been born male I suspect I would have been as queer as a three-dollar bill over other boys. I can imagine, as a male, being as uninterested in women's bodies as I now am in men's. I would have been as fey as I could get away with, taking my chances in a cruel world.

The thought of het sex would have seemed just as invasive and unclean as it does now.

Goddess, I'm glad I'm not a boy.

Glen, I know you understand, as I learn to understand you, that I like being what the paperback covers once called "between the sexes." I would not exchange my bad butch haircut and sensible shoes for all the male privilege in the universe. Or for the new set of troubles that must accompany the decisions you've made.

In the gay world of my youth we used to despise boys and girls who "went straight." It's a little more confusing when a friend goes straight in this relatively new way: by coming out as a man who loves women. A wise woman once said to me, "When you're confused, be confused."

Okay. That's cool. I'll just keep loving my friend Glen for the cat-cherishing, woman-respecting, gentle, poetic and passionate soul he is.



COURT OF FRIENDS

Okay, all you singles! Looking for that special someone? Here is your opportunity to reach out to other singles. Write out what you want other singles to know about you and what you are seeking in another. Open Arms will run your ad for 2-3 months. You can resubmit or cancel at any time.

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Send your ad to: The Court of Friends, P.O. Box 845, Mishawaka, In. 46546 You will be assigned an ID number. Your letter and ID number will be published in the next issue.

Those wishing to respond to a published single, may do so by enclosing their reply in a **stamped, sealed envelope with the ID number written in PENCIL on the front of the envelope**. Place your reply into another envelope and mail to: The Court of Friends. Your reply will then be addressed to the corresponding single and mailed.

#83.....Looking for new friends. I am single, 53, love walking, swimming, gardening, reading and writing. Like quiet, get to know each other times and letter writing, don't have e-mail.

#84.....Cute, petite, young looking, mid 40's. I enjoy long walks, bike rides, animals and seafood. I am looking for someone to share these interests and maybe more

#85.....Hi! We are a lesbian couple looking for other lesbian couples in the Niles-South Bend-Mishawaka area. Looking to play cards, have cookouts and bonfires, or go out dancing with. Don't let the summer go by without making some new friends. Email us @ pa69Ba@aol.com

#86.....I am a black female, 34, humorous, passionate, warm and kind. I love animals, movies, dining out and quiet times at home. I would like to meet a feminine/soft butch with the same interests age 25 to 45. Please no Bi's or head games.

#87.....I'm a not so soft looking butch, 52 years old. Looking for friends or possible mate. They must like the outdoors, some sports, cookouts, movies, music, traveling and friend and family get togethers. Someone who likes to take vacations and likes romantic get-a-ways. Must be able to communicate likes and dislikes and have somewhat of an open mind. Would like persons between ages of 43 and 55.

"HERO'S OF WHISTLE STOP CAFÉ"

As a pitcher of the "Whistle Stop Café", I have been thinking of who or whom are the HERO'S of the team. I don't feel that it is just one person but two different groups. Who are these groups? One is obvious, the players who make up the team. And the other is the faithful and loyal FANS.

I feel that each player is a HERO in her own right. I depend on them to be at the right place at the right time and to encourage each other when mistakes are made. As players, we are very fortunate to have an understanding COACH and teammates who encourage each other instead of discourage. Someone is always saying, "It's ok-we can do it." Which is a lot nicer to hear than the bickering on the other teams. Some players roles are to make those great plays, hit the runner in, to coach the bases or just to encourage each other along the way. We try our best every Friday night to entertain the fans and win the game. We laugh at our own mistakes and pat each other on the back.

The other group of HERO'S are the fans. They don't know what it means to me at least to hear "TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME." To me they are saying, "We are always behind you, enjoying the great plays and the goof ups." Believe me, there are a lot of goof ups. But that makes us Whistle Stop...Our fans outnumber the other teams 3 to 1. Does that tell you anything? It should. Cold, snow, heat or darkness will not discourage a "Whistle Stop Café Fan." I thank you for your loyalty and encouragement each week.

There is really no such thing as One Hero on the "WHISTLE STOP CAFÉ TEAM." We are all (players and fans) in the game together. Let's face it—we are just one big happy family of hero's.



REPORT HATE CRIMES

Justice continues to take hate crimes reports from Indiana victims. All reports are confidential and anonymous. To report a hate crime, call (317) 634-9212 or e-mail hatecrime@justiceinc.org. Justice, Inc. is a member of the Indiana Civil Rights Commission Hate Crimes Reporting Network. Anyone who has been a hate crime victim in the past can also make a report, and is encouraged to do so.



WELLNESS CORNER

By Susan Myers, R.N.,
LCSW, HTP, Holistic Health Counselor

The Positive Power of Prayer

Humans have used prayer and mental healing throughout the ages to seek assistance from a higher being for a wide range of problems, including illness. The earliest faith healers were Shamans, priests, and medicine men who used chants and ritual dances to try to influence evil spirits they believed were responsible for disease. Seeking divine intervention to heal the sick is not limited to ancient or primitive cultures. In fact, in Era III medicine, spiritual techniques are acknowledged as influential in healing.

The underlying beliefs of those who use prayer for healing are the same for all religions. They include the belief that a higher power exists, that humans can communicate with this higher being through prayer, and that this deity can hear human prayers and intervene in human affairs, including healing the sick.

In prayer, the person communicates directly with the divine being, asking her to intervene to heal the patient. In mental healing, the power of the divine being is channeled through a healer. Prayer can take the form of silent meditation or be spoken aloud, either by individuals or a group; the person engaging in prayer may seek assistance for herself or for others. Most people who use prayer for healing view it as an adjunct to conventional medical treatment.

There are two main categories of mental healing. In type 1 healing, the healer enters into a spiritual level of consciousness where she views herself and the patient as a single being. The healer doesn't have any physical contact with the patient and the two don't even need to be in the same part of the country. Another way to describe this phenomena is "long distance healing." The healer doesn't really attempt to do anything; she merely tries to achieve a spiritual unity with the patient and the Higher Power in hope that love, empathy, and unity will lead to healing. In type 2 mental healing, the healer does touch the patient, attempting to transfer energy from the healer's hands to the diseased parts of the patient's body. Both the healer and the healee commonly report a feeling of heat during this process. In both type one and type two, energy is often rebalanced and channels are opened for facilitated healing.

Although the therapeutic uses of prayer and mental healing are limitless, the reliability of these practices still needs to be established and in fact, are being researched through the National Institute of Health (NIH). Recent studies have shown tangible health benefits in people with strong religious faith. Statistics point to an increased survival rate after open heart surgery, lowered B/P in persons who attend community religious services, and lower incidence of depression and anxiety among the those who have a strong supportive community in which prayer is shared. The research done with psychoneuroimmunology has shown that, using mental techniques, an individual is able to alter blood chemistry in positive ways to enhance healing. Such recent data are causing doctors to explore further the relationship between prayer and mental processes and healing.

Spirituality is a strong component of mind-body healing and those who take time to meditate, use prayer and other spiritual rituals (in what ever positive form), form a community for support and utilize positive thinking increase their own inner healing. Like with other forms of therapies, a blend of modalities is the strongest in promoting wellness. Prayer remains one avenue for treatment that we often forget about. Yet, prayer is quite powerful.

Received via e-mail.....

Will you make a difference?

Something to think about.....

The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings, but shorter tempers; wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints; we spend more, but have less; we buy more, but enjoy it less. We have bigger houses and smaller families; more conveniences, but less time; we have more degrees, but less sense; more knowledge, but less judgment; more experts, but more problems; more medicine, but less wellness.

We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry too quickly, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom. We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often. We've learned how to make a living, but not a life; we've added years to life, not life to years. We've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet the new neighbor. We've conquered outer space, but not inner space; we've done larger things, but not better things; we've cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul; we've split the atom, but not our prejudice; we write more, but learn less; we plan more, but accomplish less. We've learned to rush, but not to wait; we have higher incomes, but lower morals; we have more food, but less appeasement; we build more computers to hold more information to produce more copies than ever, but have less communication; we've become long on quantity, but short on quality.

These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion; tall men, and short character; steep profits, and shallow relationships. These are the times of world peace, but domestic warfare; more leisure, but less fun; more kinds of food, but less nutrition. These are days of two incomes, but more divorce; of fancier houses, but broken homes. These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throw away morality, one-night stands, overweight bodies, and pills that do everything from cheer to quiet, to kill.

It is a time when there is much in the show window and nothing in the stockroom; a time when technology can bring this letter to you, and a time when you can choose either to make a difference, or to just hit delete.....





IN THE NEWS

Washington: A strong bipartisan majority of American voters— including majorities of fundamentalist Christian and Republican primary voters— would consider voting for a gay or lesbian candidate for state legislature or Congress. The research, in which respondents were screened for likely participation in the year 2000 elections, was sponsored by the Gay and Lesbian Victory Foundation, found that 77 percent of voters, including 65% of Republicans, 85% of Democrats and 81% of Independents would consider voting for a gay or lesbian candidate based on the candidate's stand on the issues. Furthermore, these voters including 64% of fundamentalist Christians, 81% of mainline Protestants and 87% of Catholics would consider supporting gay or lesbian candidates

based on the issues. Lynn Greer, the chair and founding member of the Victory Foundation said, "We see that—despite their differences—voters are coming together around some very important issues." Two other areas of common ground for voters: 75% of voters agreed that crimes motivated by bias based on sexual orientation should be considered hate crimes and 77% of voters agreed that it should be illegal to fire people from their jobs just because of their sexual orientation. According to pollster, Diane Feldman, voters make few issue distinctions based on a candidate's sexual orientation. Voters have extremely negative attitudes about typical politicians, who they see as relatively dishonest, whereas gay & lesbian candidates are more likely to demonstrate strong political values. Feldman added that, "gay and lesbian candidates can overcome any reservations voters might have by advocating a clear set of issue priorities, by being honest about their orientation without dwelling on personal information and by demonstrating strong political values." The Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund is the only national organization whose sole mission is to increase the number of outstanding openly gay and lesbian public officials. As the nation's 14th largest non-connected PAC, the Fund has generated more than \$2 million for qualified openly gay and lesbian candidates at all levels of government.

For more information, visit the Victory Foundation at: www.victoryfund.org/foundation

The No. 1 graduate at the Naval Academy this year was a woman (Mary Godfrey of Wis.), as was No. 2, and Nos. 4, 6, and 9. Half of the top 10 grads were women, who made up only 15% of the Class of 1999. Overall, it was the best showing yet for women at the Academy, where class standing is more than just good grades. Military competency and conduct and athletic achievements determine 35% of the merit standings.

Homosexuals who help their partners raise a child have visitation rights after the couples break up says the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. The court ruled in a case of a lesbian who helped her partner raise her son, saying the woman was "de facto" or "in fact" a parent of the child, like other children in traditional families. Gay and lesbian parents can adopt in Massachusetts.

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One WOMAN and Her Dog

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Open Arms exists to disseminate diverse information of interest to the Michiana lesbian community. *Open Arms* is mailed monthly in a security envelope with a PO Box return address only. Our mailing list is kept confidential and never shared with other publications or special interest groups.

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July 1999

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 & MARY



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 	2	3
4 	5	6	7 	8	9 	10
11 	12	13	14	15	16	17 
18 	19 	20 	21 	22	23	24
25	26	27 	28 	29 	30	31 